

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Thursday, June 8, 2006
MACO Conference Room
Helena, MT
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Officers

☒ Doug Kaercher, President

☒ John Prinkki, 1st Vice President

☒ Cynthia Johnson, 2nd Vice President

☒ Allan Underdal, Fiscal Officer

☒ Greg Chilcott, Urban Representative

☒ Bill Kennedy, Past President

☒ Bernie Lucas, District #9

☒ Paddy Trusler, District #10

☒ Bill Carey, District #11

☒ David Schulz, District #12

District Chairs

☒ Richard Dunbar, District #1

☒ Mark Rehbein, District #2

☒ Joan Stahl, District #3

☒ Art Kleinjan, District #4

☒ Arnie Gettel, District #5

☒ Carl Seilstad, District #6

☒ Maureen Davey, District #7

☒ Mike Murray, Designee for
Ed Tinsley, District #8

Association Representatives

☒ Leo Gallagher, Attorneys

☐ Pam Castleberry, Clerk and Records

☒ Marilyn Hollister, Clerks of Court

☐ Richard Brown, Coroners

☒ Gary A. Olsen, Magistrates

☐ T. Gregory Hintz, Sheriff & Peace Officers

☐ Stephanie Downs, Treasurers

☒ Karla Christensen, School Superintendents

OTHERS PRESENT: MACo Executive Director, Harold Blattie;
MACo Associate Director, Sheryl Wood
MACo Publications Officer, Marie McAlear

1. Approval of Minutes – February 13, 2006:

The motion to approve the minutes of February 13, 2006, was seconded and passed.

2. MACo/NACo Committee Appointment/Representative Policy:

President Kaercher announced that he had made an effort to reduce MACo committee travel expenses by limiting membership in each committee to ten people, and by reducing appointments to NACo Steering Committees. Several of the appointments that were reduced were subsequently restored due to the securing of sponsorships. MACo Committee and NACo Steering Committee appointments are at the discretion of the President of MACo. Representatives of other organizations such as the Coalition of Forest Counties and Oil, Gas and Coal Counties will also be appointed, as long as the costs associated with travel are paid by the respective organizations.

3. NACo Travel Reimbursement Policy:

First Vice President John Prinkki, Carbon County, announced that the MACo travel and reimbursement policy for MACo committee members would be clarified, allowing travel costs to be refunded only if the travel has been approved by the MACo President and/or Executive Director beforehand. President Kaercher described a previous incident of a committee members travel completed before MACo knew about it and he felt this was another way to keep travel budget contained. Commissioner Murray suggested a newsletter article so all committee members would know of the change.

Bill Carey, District 11 Chair, Missoula County moved to approve the revised Travel Policy regarding committee travel was seconded and passed.

Executive Directory Harold Blattie added that he appreciates the decision because he was often in an awkward position in regards to the approval of committee travel.

4. Personnel Policy and Procedures:

Executive Director Blattie announced the MACo Personnel Policy to be a work in progress. Some modifications had been approved by the Board at the Midwinter Conference bring it into alignment it with current state and federal statutes. It is anticipated that additional modifications will be presented for consideration at the MACo Annual Conference.

Associate Director Sheryl Wood described the current configuration of the Policy to be in three parts: the staff personnel policy and procedure manual, operational policies, and position descriptions. In other organizations, the Director is given the authority to manage staff, within budget authority. With separate position descriptions, the Director has more ability to match position descriptions to the actual duties and responsibilities. Requests for new positions and/or additional budget authority will still be submitted to the Board for approval. Director Blattie reported that the current administrative assistant hiring process is an example of the time involved in getting the position filled, because the Board had to approve proposed modifications to the position description.

President Kaercher stated that with the dollar value for the administrative assistant, no one is applying, so there is a need to tweak the job description, but it's not necessary to bring it to the Board. The Board needs to let management deal with it. The Executive Director and the Associate Director job descriptions would still be established, modified and approved by the Board.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the operational policies would be included with personnel policies or with operations. Director Blattie responded that some operation policies could be attached to the personnel

policy as exhibits or have references from one to the other, but we would keep operational policies separate. One item on the “to do” list is the task to compile other operational and board policies to have a complete record and index of all policies adopted.

Mark Rehbein, Richland County, District 2 Chair, moved to separate the operating and board policies and position descriptions from the personnel policy. The motion was seconded and passed.

5. Administrative Assistant Search Status:

Director Blattie reported that the search for an Administrative Assistant has not yet been successful. The announcement was posted on Job Service, where it was posted for a week and two applications were received. It was felt this was not a large enough applicant pool, so the position was re-opened, listed with Job Service and an ad placed in the local paper. Two more applications were received, but both requested more than the approved salary range. The supplement question dealing with research was deleted, along with the requirements for Job Service testing, and references to an hourly rate were deleted and the salary was posted as negotiable “depending on qualifications and/or experience”. It began advertising last Sunday and will run for three days this week. Helena is in a very tight employment market and its possible that any notion of hiring someone in the \$9 to \$11 range just won’t happen.

Paulette Dehart: Clerk and Recorder, Lewis and Clark County, stated that they have positions in Lewis and Clark County that would do similar work with no requirements starting at \$10.40.

Director Blattie stated that an alternative plan of combining two positions could be considered if we are unable to find an individual suitable for our needs. Currently, the Association is operating fine with current staff absorbing some of the additional duties in the interim, but phone answering with some employees working flexible hours make late afternoons hard to cover. As we move into staffs scheduled summer vacations, there may be a need to hire a temporary to answer phones.

Gary Olson encouraged Director Blattie to hire someone to be on the phones, even if it’s a high school person. Counties just want to talk to a person and leave a message. Mark Rehbein advised that they use job shadowing a lot and it is effective. Paddy Trusler commented that MACo is competing against other high-wage areas in state. This might be a good time to hire a high school person.

6. County Leadership Institute Report:

Cynthia Johnson, MACo 2nd VP, reported that attending the County Leadership Institute was an incredibly valuable opportunity to experience being a leader and to learn to cause change to happen, even if you aren’t comfortable in the role. The purpose of the Institute is to help people to become more effective leaders. The primary instructor was author Mardi Lunz of “Leadership on the Line”. His main point was that leaders must acknowledge themselves as having a role in any situation. There were 24 in the group, and each participant could ask uncomfortable questions of people they didn’t know. The schedule for the Institute was full; there were only three hours outside the courses of free time. Cynthia reported that she personally paid all costs to attend the Institute. If MACo were to offer a contribution to assist an individual to attend, MACo could have a return on its contribution by having the individual do a workshop with some of the exercises at a membership meeting. The candidate needs to have a personal financial commitment but MACo could encourage developing leadership skills with a small contribution. One example of an exercise is a self-survey to determine management abilities and how the abilities fit with the rest of world and with other managers - “Which of 16 types am I and how does that relate to rest of world”?

If someone knows what another person is like and what they are like, then they can collaborate or work together better.

Commissioner Murray stated that their county feels the concept is valuable and useable with all department heads, counties, schools, etc. President Kaercher reported that the Executive Board discussed using MACo dollars to send people to workshops like this, and asked if MACo could set up a scholarship fund of \$500-\$1000 for members to apply to go to one of these institutes. Commissioner Chilcott felt this would encourage furthering our abilities as elected officials. Commissioner Trusler agreed and asked that this be tied back to the Association with a workshop or session.

No action was taken.

7. District Meetings/Nominations Update:

Executive Director Blattie and Associate Director Wood reported on the District meetings held in May.

Most district chairs were selected at the recent district meetings, but districts could wait until August meetings. He reported the results of elections held at the District meetings:

Dist	Chair	Vice Chair	Exp	Note
1	Richard Dunbar	Dave Rienhardt	07	(2 yr)
2	* Will Elect in August		08	(2 yr)
3	* Will Elect in August		08	(2 yr)
4	Harvey Worrall	Russ Tempel	07	(1 yr)
5	Arnie Gettel	Ben Ober	07	(1 yr)
6	Carl Sielstad	Bob Goffena	07	(2 yr)
7	Maureen Davey	Chad Fenner	08	(2 yr)
8	Tom Lythgoe	Mike Murray	08	(2 yr)
9	Bernie Lucas	Jim Durgan	08	(2 yr)
10	Paddy Trussler	Rita Windom	07	(2 yr)
11	Judy Stang	Alan Thompson	08	(2 yr)
12	Tom Rice	Suzy Browning	08	(2 yr)

Thus far, there are three nominations for Second Vice President, with nominations to remain open until the closing general session at the annual conference.

1. Lance Olson, Cascade County, nominated by Districts 4 and 5
2. Jean Curtiss, Missoula County, nominated by Districts 10 and 11
3. Mike McGinley, Beaverhead County, nominated by Districts 8, 9 and 12

MACo 1st VP John Prinkki apologized for not attending district meetings but there was a conflict with the Meth conference. He stated the importance of MACo officers attending district meetings.

President Kaercher reported that he was also at the Meth Conference, representing MACo on a panel presentation, but planed to be at the August meetings. His observation was that members often assume from annual conference proceedings that ideas are the same statewide, but when Board members attend District meetings, they learn that they are all different. Different things are more important in different areas of the state. He encouraged Board members to attend district meetings other than their own.

Associate Director Wood reported that there were several resolutions adopted at district meetings:

Summer Youth Employment Training Program: The Resolution as proposed had been amended to add minimum wage language and requesting program oversight be moved to DPHHS from Labor. The program is to be state funded and managed, so MACo cannot designate who is to manage the program,

but can make a recommendation.

Grey Wolf Management: Requests enforcement of state management policies and more communication with local governments and landowners.

Airport Authorities: The Airport Authority has taxing authority, but has refused to allow county representation on the board. *Note: The Board asked that the Resolutions Committee determine if this is a local or statewide issue.*

E-911 cost and recovery: Supporting legislation to add a fee to cellular phone bills to add GPS coverage for cell phones to facilitate Phase II of E-911.

Mail Ballots: Currently, mail ballots are not allowed in federal elections. This would enable counties to have the option of holding mail ballot elections in primary and general elections.

Aging Services: The resolution is to support The Aging Services and Older Montanan's Trust Fund. A letter from to Governor Schweitzer was proposed previously, to support \$3M in the state budget for the trust fund. It was discovered the funding was not in the Governor's proposed budget so the letter was not sent.

The Resolutions Committee will meet June 23 to begin organizing for annual conference.

8. Future Meetings Update:

Director Blattie and Associate Director Wood reported on upcoming meetings through the end of December.

Director Blattie reported that the Education and Conference Planning Committees met and decided to change the Commissioner Certification process to include one week after November elections and then one full week the following December, rather than in conjunction with other MACo conferences. Attendance has been difficult to track.

Director Blattie reported that summer district meetings will need to be held in time for resolutions to be properly prepared for the annual conference. We will need to work out a schedule, perhaps at the end of August. Commissioner Stahl asked if it was possible to have district meetings at the beginning of the Annual Conference. Director Blattie responded that it was not possible in a pre-legislative year, because of the time needed to prepare resolutions to present to the full membership. Our Bylaws require they be sent to members at least 10 days prior to the Annual Conference. Commissioner Johnson asked if we could hold meetings just for resolutions. Director Blattie responded that that had been done before, but it was very expensive to pay the travel costs, etc.

Director Blattie and Associate Director Wood reported on other items that were discussed during the spring district meetings:

The NACo Nationwide Deferred Compensation Agreement has been extended three times, and now goes through June 30, 2006. There are two agreements--one for marketing and one for royalties. MACo will earn revenue from each agreement. Provisions of the Marketing Agreement allow for different levels of participation in marketing the program. Currently MACo qualifies for the highest level of marketing assistance so we will earn the highest rate of return. The Royalty Agreement will earn revenue based upon the volume of investments. These are a significant source of revenue for MACo.

In Districts 4 and 5, State Senator Black is sponsoring a renewable grant for Chester. The district passed a motion to request MACo write a letter of support for the project.

Harold Blattie discussed an Idaho Association of Counties publication, "Idaho Public Lands--Facts and Figures" and asked if MACo should consider purchasing one for each Montana county, or if MACo should consider doing a Montana version. There was general consensus that we should investigate the cost of doing our own.

It was reported that Jane Jelinski, Director of the Local Government Center at MSU is finishing an updated "Montana Counties on the Move", and is performing the drafting at no cost to MACo. We have budgeted to publish a limited number of hard copies and will also put it online. This is a good handbook about county government. Commissioner Prinkki asked if public lands publication be folded into this document. Director Blattie responded that it could be considered, and that he would check with Jane Jelinski to see what her thoughts might be.

Associate Director Wood reported on a recent meeting that was called by representatives from the Western Counties Alliance, during the Governor's Emergency Preparedness Conference in Billings. MACo cautions counties to investigate this group and their intentions and activities thoroughly before joining. MACo suggests that counties carefully consider how it will affect our work with Congress. The benefits received for the \$7500 membership dues are limited, as this group will focus on two land use proposals only. They have stated they would work with state associations, but MACo had not had contact from them. When asked if they had the support and/or endorsement from NACo, WIR and/or the Coalition of Forest Counties, they responded no. Some western congressional delegates formed this group. When asked if Montana congressmen supported, they responded that they didn't "not support it".

Commissioner Murray stated that MACo pays dues for two people to serve on the WIR Board of Directors, which is backed up by full time staff at NACo to lobby Congress. Essentially only a few Utah counties belong to this new organization. Your MACo/NACo dues already pay for a WIR membership. At the moment, the NACo staff representative working with them.

9. President's Scholarship Award Presentation:

PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIP

President Kaercher introduced and presented a \$500 MACo scholarship to Andrew Dusek, a recent graduate of Havre High School. Attending the Board meeting with Andrew were his parents, Douglas and Cheryl, his sister and his aunt. Andrew plans to attend the University of Montana to study broadcast journalism.

Morgan Gatzemeier, North Star High School in Hingham, received the \$1,000 Scholarship but was unable to attend the Board meeting.

10. Classification and Compensation Study Report:

Director Blattie and Associate Director Wood reported on the completion of the Classification and Compensation study. The purpose of the study was to look at salary levels and compare MACo salaries to the Helena market for both public and private sectors. By establishing a range for the salary of each of our staff positions we will have a better tool to consider all of the variables related to setting actual salaries, such as specific duties and essential functions along with additional education or skills above the minimum requirements for a position.

At this time, the Board convened in Executive Session to review the results of the recent classification and compensation study.

11. MACo Pins:

MACo PINS

Per previous Board discussions, the MACo logo-pin design was sent to Montana Silversmith's to produce a permanent gift source for visiting dignitaries. This could be used instead of books, artwork, etc. The design and die cost is \$500, with individual pin costs to be about \$10 each. It is anticipated that county officials would be interested in purchasing these so that MACo could earn back the investment for design.

Commissioner Davey reported that Montana Silversmith's had informed her that our current cloisonné pins would cost about \$0.25 each. The new pins would be custom-crafted by Montana Silversmiths, so would be more expensive. They would not be used for "trading".

Commissioner Dunbar voiced a concern that it would take a couple hundred pins to recover the \$500 set-up fee. Commissioner Johnson stated that once the pin design is complete, it could then be used for any other type of silver item produced by Montana Silversmiths. MACo would own the design and artwork so could also use it for other purposes. Commissioner Kennedy commented that MACo could order anything out of the Montana Silversmiths catalogue and have the MACo emblem on it. Yellowstone County is bidding to host the WIR conference again, and these would be great gifts to give from MACo.

Commissioner Murray moved, to approve the project and to approve spending \$500 as the set-up fee. The motion was seconded and passed.

12. Other Business:

MACo Executive Director Evaluation Report

Director Blattie chose not to go into Executive Session. Doug Kaercher handed out a summary of the Executive Director evaluations and noted that 32 commissions responded, with two received after the deadline. Those two are not included in the summary. He said that the originals are available upon request. The Executive Board reviewed the evaluation and expressed the belief that Blattie has continued our level of great respect. Some comments included in the responses were: "We applaud him and know he will work on those areas mentioned", and "We think he has developed a good staff."

Karla Christensen, representing County Superintendents of Schools expressed that their organization was pleased that Executive Director Blattie had Associate Director Sheryl Wood attend their state meeting. They have felt that they were not a part of MACo for some time and their members viewed her attendance as a very positive change.

At this time, the MACo Board of Directors meeting was adjourned. The Board of Directors reconvened in a joint session with the JPIA and JPA Trustees for Final Budget Adoption.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2006.

Harold Blattie, MACo Executive Director

Doug Kaercher, MACo President